

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
ZONING HEARING BOARD**

Meeting of November 1, 2007

Members in Attendance

Sara Jane Cate, Vice Chairperson
Richard Freeburn
Jeffrey Staub

Also in Attendance

James Turner, Solicitor
Lori Wissler, Planning & Zoning Officer

Special Exception #07-07

Applicant:	Preston Byers & Cindy Kerns
Address:	4815 Sweetbrier Drive, Harrisburg, PA
Property:	4815 Sweetbrier Drive, Harrisburg, PA Tax Parcel #35-094-054
Interpretation:	A pet grooming business is a major home occupation, and a major home occupation requires a Special Exception. Applicant proposes to establish a pet grooming business at 4815 Sweetbrier Drive, in the R-1, Low Density Residential District.
Grounds:	Article 306.B.1 of the Lower Paxton Township Codified Ordinances pertains to this application.

The following were sworn in: Preston Byers, 4815 Sweetbrier Drive, Harrisburg, PA, applicant; Cindy Kerns, 4815 Sweetbrier Drive, applicant, Harrisburg, PA,; and Lori Wissler, Planning and Zoning Officer.

The applicant had no objection to entering the application, site plans and attachments as exhibits.

Ms. Wissler testified that the appropriate fees were paid on September 28, 2007. Proper advertisements were made in the Paxton Herald on October 17 and 24, 2007. The property was posted October 23, 2007.

Ms. Wissler testified that Article 3, Section 306.B.1, of the Lower Paxton Township Codified Ordinances, pertains to this Special Exception application. A pet grooming business is considered a major home occupation and a major home occupation requires a Special Exception. The applicant wishes to establish a pet grooming business at 4815 Sweetbrier Drive.

Mr. Byers stated that Cindy Kerns has had a pet grooming business in West Hanover Township for 12 years. She now desires to move the business to 4815 Sweetbrier Drive.

Ms. Kerns testified that she works full time elsewhere and would operate the pet grooming business on the evenings and weekends.

Mr. Byers stated that there is a patio with a roof that they will obtain a building permit to enclose, and that room will accommodate the business. There is a concrete walkway from the front of the house around through the gate in the stockade fence leading to the patio. There is a side entrance to the house so customers would not walk through the house to get to the business.

Mr. Byers stated there is a two-car garage as well as two parking spaces to accommodate customer drop-off and pick-up. There should be no need for on-street parking.

Mr. Freeburn asked where in West Hanover Township the business was located. Ms. Kerns stated it was in her home in a neighborhood very similar to the Twin Lakes development. It was located behind West Hanover Township Elementary.

Mr. Freeburn asked if the property was zoned to allow such a business in the home. Ms. Kerns answered no, noting that she went through the same process to permit the business 12 years ago. That worked out fine.

Ms. Wissler agreed that the neighborhood is very similar to the Twin Lakes development.

Mr. Freeburn asked about Ms. Kerns' full-time job. Ms. Kerns stated she is a diesel fuel cashier at Pilot Travel Center. She works Monday through Thursday, 7:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Mr. Freeburn asked what hours the applicant will run the pet grooming business. Ms. Kerns stated in the evenings, Monday through Thursday, and early on Friday and Saturday.

Mr. Freeburn asked if there would be parking conflicts when there is more than one customer at the home. Mr. Freeburn asked how many customers would be there at a time. Ms. Kerns stated that she can only do one dog at a time and does not have the next one waiting in a kennel; she felt that was too stressful for the animals. If one owner has two pets, they may be done at the same time, but usually there is one at a time.

Mr. Freeburn asked if Ms. Kerns has an established clientele, and how many clients she has. Ms. Kerns stated she does have an established clientele, and has approximately 50 clients.

Mr. Freeburn asked how often a typical pet is groomed. Ms. Kerns answered about every five to six weeks.

Mr. Freeburn asked how many pets would be done per week. Ms. Kerns stated it depends on the time of year, but she normally does one to two per night.

Mr. Freeburn asked if there will be any employees. Ms. Kerns stated she has no employees, but occasionally her daughter or Mr. Byers might help out.

Mr. Freeburn asked if any advertising is done. Ms. Kerns answered no. She stated that in the past she advertised in the phone book, and was overwhelmed with the response, so she does not advertise.

Mr. Freeburn asked about supplies. Ms. Kerns stated that she uses shampoos, clippers, scissors, and dryers, all similar to a beauty shop. Some supplies are delivered via UPS or FedEx or typical home delivery trucks, and some she goes out to buy.

Mr. Freeburn asked about signage. Ms. Kerns stated if she puts up a sign it will be small. Mr. Byers added that the ordinance allows a one-square foot sign that is not illuminated, and whatever sign is put up will comply with that. Mr. Freeburn asked about signage at the West Hanover Township location. Ms. Kerns stated she has a small sign similar to a real estate yard stake sign.

Mr. Freeburn asked if the proposed enclosure will meet the zoning regulations. Ms. Wissler stated there are no zoning issues with the enclosure.

Mr. Staub asked if the sign is required to be attached to the building. Ms. Wissler stated that under the Special Exception section of the ordinance, the sign is permitted to be on the building or on a pole not higher than six feet. She noted that typically in-home businesses have a small sign near the door that the customers use.

Ms. Cate asked about the hours of operation of the business. Ms. Kerns stated that on the evenings, she will work between 3:30 pm and about 6:00 pm. On Fridays, she starts no earlier than 10:00 am, and goes until about noon, but no later than 3:00 pm. Ms. Cate asked if the applicant ever works past 6:00 pm. Ms. Kerns stated she tries not to.

Ms. Cate asked if the applicant sells products to her customers. Ms. Kerns answered no, noting that products are readily available at various retailers.

Ms. Cate asked if the applicants spoke to the neighbors across the street. Mr. Byers stated he did, even though it is not depicted on the submission. That neighbor has one cat and has no opposition to the business. He further noted that the neighbors he spoke to not only have no problem with the business, but they expected to have their pets groomed there as well.

Mr. Freeburn asked if there is proposed lighting for the proposed sign. Ms. Kerns answered no. Mr. Freeburn asked if there is a light on the current sign. Ms. Kerns answered no.

Mr. Freeburn asked if there is training required to be a pet groomer or if there is any licensing required. Ms. Kerns stated she is required to be certified, but there is no license. She is certified. She has had show horses since she was a child and has a lot of experience with grooming them. Mr. Freeburn asked if the grooming business includes horses. Ms. Kerns answered no.

Mr. Turner asked if there will be delivery trucks to the house. Ms. Kerns stated there are occasional deliveries made by typical residential delivery services. She noted that since she does

not sell the products, the deliveries are infrequent. Mr. Byers noted that, to reduce the stress on the pet, Ms. Kerns does not do the grooming on a table; she gets down on the floor with them for grooming services.

Ms. Cate asked how the hair is disposed of. Ms. Kerns stated she bags it with her normal household trash.

Mr. Staub asked about weekend hours and if the business will operate on Saturdays and Sundays. Ms. Kerns stated that on Friday and Saturday she works from about 10:00 am to about noon. It may go as late as 3:00 pm, but not usually. She does not usually, but occasionally will work on Sundays.

Ms. Cate asked how long it takes to groom a dog. Ms. Kerns stated it takes about two hours from the time the pet is dropped off until they are dry and ready to be picked up.

Mr. Freeburn asked about the prices of the grooming services. Ms. Kerns stated that prices are determined by the amount of work needed.

The Township had no position on this application.

There was no comment from the audience.

Mr. Freeburn made a motion to grant Special Exception 07-07 with the condition that the business sign not exceed one square foot and not be illuminated. Mr. Staub seconded the motion. A roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Staub-Aye; Mr. Freeburn-Aye; and Ms. Cate-Aye. Special Exception 07-07 was granted.

The hearing ended at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner
Recording Secretary